

The Gull-billed Tern in Western Australia.—The first observation of the Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) in South-western Australia was that of V. N. Serventy (*W.A. Nat.*, 5: 23) at Morawa in August 1953. Others from Moora (*W.A. Nat.*, 5: 143), Cooloongup Lake (*Emu*, 57: 353), and Lake Graae (*Emu*, 58: 19) rapidly followed.

On October 22, 1957, B. V. Teague and I collected a specimen at Hutt Lagoon, some 45 miles north of Geraldton. The specimen was a male in full nuptial plumage, the forehead, crown and nape being black; legs, black; iris, brown; and gonads enlarged. Dimensions were: culmen, from skull, 50 mm.; exposed culmen, 47 mm.; culmen from anterior point of nostril, 33 mm.; wing, 348 mm.; tail to tip of longest feather, 144 mm.; tail to middle of fork, 92 mm.; tarsus, 46.5 mm. Altogether some forty nuptial-plumaged Gull-billed Terns were seen feeding over the salt lake.

On November 9, 1957, I saw an eclipse-plumaged Gull-billed Tern near the Murray River estuary, Peel Inlet. The black on the head was confined to a small area around the eyes and the diagnostic black bill arrested attention as the individual flew overhead.

Because of the apparent rarity of the species in Western Australia generally (Serventy and Whittell, *Birds of Western Australia*, 1951), it is opportune to record an observation made in the North-West. From January 10 to 18, 1959, I frequently observed the species along the Harding River, near Roebourne. Both nuptial- and eclipse-plumaged terns, the latter predominating, were feeding on the fresh-water fish trapped in the river, which, at the time, consisted of a series of large pools.

—JULIAN FORD, Attadale.

OBITUARY

B. V. TEAGUE

Brian Vincent Teague was born at Dwellingup on September 5, 1927, and was accidentally killed whilst on duty with the Railway Department at Fremantle on December 19, 1957. His untimely death cut short what had every prospect of being a very promising career in natural history.

Brian, with his younger brother Maleolm (also deceased) and his sister Margaret, were educated entirely through the Correspondence Classes of the Education Department. All three were such sound pupils that they were offered scholarships, though none of the three took these up. Brian in particular showed a keen aptitude for drawing and sketching and was especially good with bird subjects. Miss Olive Seymour, secretary of the Gould League of Birdlovers and a member of the Correspondence Classes staff, encouraged him to prepare a number of bird sketches when he was in the upper primary grades and these were mounted for display, as "Birds of the Williams District," forming part of the Gould League exhibitions in the early Wild Life Shows at the Perth Town Hall.

This association with the Gould League led to his joining in turn

the W.A. Naturalists' Club, the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union and the Royal Society of W.A. He took bird study seriously and developed into a very competent field ornithologist. He had interests in other groups as well, however, especially the reptiles. Conservation, particularly in respect to the preservation of habitats, brought him into public activity. When living at Narrogin he strove for the better local recognition of the neighbouring fauna and flora reserves. Members of the Club, who accompanied him on ornithological field trips he organized, found him an infectiously enthusiastic companion. He was an active participant in the R.A.O.U. Camp-Out at Dumbleyung in September 1956. So engrossed did he become in natural history studies that he was considering plans to take up a University science course.

He had joined the locomotive branch of the W.A. Government Railways and was assistant fireman at the time of his death. Service in country railways provided him with an opportunity of extending his natural history observations over a wide area in the South-West and in the Wheatbelt. On all his trips he kept detailed field-notes. Some of these observations have been published in the W.A. *Naturalist* either under his own authorship or as a contribution to the studies of others (cf. vol. 6, p. 92). It is hoped that more will be put on record posthumously.

—D.L.S.



Brian Teague at the Wild Life Show, September, 1957.

—"West Australian" photo.